

REMARKSRejection of the claims under 35 USC 102:

Claims 14-17, 24-27 and 29-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Saone et al. (US Patent 6,844,842). Applicants have amended the claims to obviate the rejection. Specifically, Applicants have incorporated claims 25 and 30 into claims 1 and 26 respectfully, and further limited the amphipathic compound to neutral, zwitterionic, or negatively charged amphipathic compounds. Support for neutral, zwitterionic, or negatively charged amphipathic compounds can be found in the specification on page 9 lines 2-3, and page 13 lines 24-25. Soane teaches that the amphipathic compound must have functional groups that are complementary to surface sites of the target or are capable of undergoing a binding interaction with the target (nucleic acid of the instant claim). The head groups of neutral, anionic or zwitterionic amphipathic compounds would not be capable of undergoing a binding interaction with negatively charged nucleic acid.

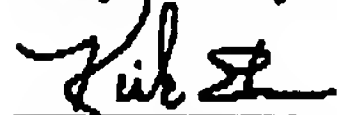
Rejection of the claims under 35 USC 112:

Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicants have amended the claims to obviate the rejection. Specifically, Applicants have amended the phrase "biologically labile bond" to the phrase "labile bond" in claims 16, 17, 20 and 23. The stability or lability of silicon-heteroatom bonds is well known in the art.

Claim 28 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, for lack of antecedent basis for the term "the disulfide bond." Applicants have amended the claim to contain proper antecedent basis.

The Examiner's rejections are now believed to be overcome by this response to the Office Action. In view of Applicants' amendment and arguments, it is submitted that claims 14-17, 20, 23, 26-28, and 31 should be allowable.

Respectfully submitted,



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